

VZCZCXYZ0003
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBY #1194 3310615
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 260615Z NOV 08
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0580
INFO RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS CANBERRA 001194

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EEB M LURIE, J SPECK, USAID FOR B HAMMINK
DEPT PASS TO USAID - USDA FOR K MILLER

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [AS](#)
SUBJECT: AUSTRALIA RESPONSE ON GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD

REF: STATE 123480

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Post Economic and Agriculture officers met with officials from Australian Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and AusAID to discuss the Global Partnership on Agriculture and Food (GPAF). The GOA expressed strong interest in possibly participating in the GPAF and plans on providing the Embassy a formal response to the talking points. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) Embassy officers met with GOA officials on Wednesday November 25 to learn the reaction of the government to the talking points contained in ref cable. Discussing the food situation in general terms, they stated that AusAID and DFAT some months ago formed a task force to coordinate the government's response to the global food security issues. It was clear from the meeting that the Rudd government takes the global food security issue very seriously as well as the GPAF. AusAID is sending one of their higher level staff to Brussels and Paris next week to meet with appropriate EU and French officials respectively to discuss the GPAF.

¶3. (SBU) The GOA officials expressed their general satisfaction with the notion that the United Nations High-Level Task Force (HLTF) would be the proposed Secretariat. Nonetheless, they requested more information on how the GPAF would serve as a body to coordinate real program and policy responses and not develop into a "talk fest." The Australian officials referred to an FAO proposed follow up meeting to the June Rome meeting and asked for clarification on how the GPAF meeting would not be a redundant.

¶5. (SBU) Post will forward the coordinated Australian government response to our demarche once it is finalized, likely later this week. Any decision on whether Australia will actually join GPAF, however, will require Ministerial approval that might take a little more time.

MCCALLUM